

27th
ANNUAL REPORT
of
The New Jersey Urban League, Inc.
Newark Branch

58 West Market Street, Newark (3), N. J.

An Interracial Agency for Social Work Among Negroes

1943



"Not Alms But Opportunity"

An Affiliate of the
National Urban League
1133 Broadway, New York City

Member of the
Welfare Federation of Newark
Chamber of Commerce Bldg., Newark, N. J.



The New Jersey Urban League
and
Phyllis Wheatley Home
58 West Market Street
Newark, N. J.

PRESIDENT'S INTRODUCTORY MESSAGE

Again we come to the period which marks the close of another eventful year of Urban League activity.

Friends of the New Jersey Urban League, as well as its officers, directors, members and staff, have reason to feel gratified at the year's achievements.

The period since the last annual meeting has been marked by special strains and tensions among segments of our population. Trained leadership was required which, without compromise on basic principles and rights inherent in our American philosophy of government, could bring reasoned and calm judgment and constructive programs of action to bear. The staff of the local Urban League, as well as that of the National organization, served as the natural rallying point for that leadership.

While we feel our share of shame for the anti-American, and undemocratic incidents that occurred in this area, we feel pride in the fact that such incidents were held to comparatively small proportions and were quickly dispelled by positive community action.

The Urban League played its part in formulating community policy and guiding public sentiment during this trying period. The accumulated experience over a period of more than 20 years of activity prepared the League to serve as an instrument through which the more constructive, citizen approach could be made to the social situation created by race tension.

We are always glad, at the end of the year, to express appreciation to those who have made the work of the League effective in the community. We feel sure from the many evidences of support that new friends have been gained. The constantly increasing attendance at our annual meetings bears witness to the growing interest in our work.

We are especially glad at this time to express our deep appreciation to the Trustees of the Welfare Federation who, through the wise counsel and cooperation of the Federation staff and by financial support, have evidenced recognition of the demands today for the type of community service the Urban League is uniquely fitted to render.

Last year the Federation sponsored a community survey to determine the areas of greatest need for Urban League activity. Based upon the facts revealed by the survey, the Welfare Federation this year supported a program designed to effectuate the principal recommendations of the Survey Report.

Thus we have been able to reestablish an Industrial Relations Department in our functioning organization. After searching the field for a man who could meet the challenge of this currently urgent work in the relations of the Negro and industry in New Jersey, we have secured an Industrial Secretary whose training and background warrant the expectation of noteworthy achievement in the months ahead.

In addition the League has been able to institute a department for closer contact with the people on a neighborhood level. For this latter work we have just secured the services of a highly trained and otherwise well qualified additional staff member, who will serve as Neighborhood Secretary. She will be the League's ambassador to the people in their homes, their clubs and their churches.

So, as we come to the end of another year's work, we look with what we feel is justifiable pride upon the accomplishments of the past and we face our accepted tasks for the future humbled by their magnitude but hopeful because of the growing consciousness of an ever-expanding host of friends and well-wishers.

L. HAMILTON GARNER
President, Executive Board

REPORT OF THE NEW JERSEY URBAN LEAGUE for the Year 1943

When I compare
What I have lost with what I have gained,
What I have missed with what I have attained,
Little room do I find for pride.

But who shall dare
To measure loss and gain in this wise?
Defeat may be victory in disguise;
The lowest ebb is the turn of the tide.

From "LOSS AND GAIN"
By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The primary function of the Urban League is that of creating better racial relations, by stimulating interest in the common factors through which better understanding can be achieved. Only through mutual understanding between the races can real gains be registered in the Negro's quest for employment opportunity, better housing, more adequate educational and health facilities, and full citizenship rights.

The League executive, during 1943, has talked face to face with nearly 18,000 New Jersey citizens, a preponderance of whom were of the majority groups. They were young and old, progressive and conservative, working-class and middle-class in all brackets; Protestant, Catholic and Jew. The one conclusion arrived at from the sum-total of this and many previous years of like experience, is that FEAR through MISUNDERSTANDING—not ANTIPATHY—is at the root of the American race problem. Perhaps in no other area of American life do so many otherwise well-informed people know so little, yet struggle so desperately to retain deeply-rooted and firmly-fixed beliefs, opinions and apprehensions.

These fears can be likened to any superstition which establishes a taboo, and denies the individual the incentive or right to examine the cause of his fears. Will it bring "bad-luck" if a mirror is broken? How many will break a mirror for the purpose of testing the validity of the tradition? And yet, it is universally acknowledged that superstition yields inevitably to enlightening experience and the resulting knowledge thus acquired.

So with the "race problem" superstition. White America and black America, overwhelmed with suspicion, distrust and fear, permit the dark pages of American history and the isolated experiences of individuals, to separate one group, physically and psychologically, from the other. Each is cloistered within the psychological walls which other generations have erected. Each is denied by these barriers the desire or privilege of pursuing the only effective course through which knowledge may supplant prejudice—cooperative action.

Attempts to report agency action, and to measure the gains and losses experienced by the Negro in New Jersey, during a single year

of time, may well be prefaced by the poet's admonition. In an area of interest so beclouded by fear and superstition, the seemingly insignificant items may well be the most important.

No one will be so impractical as to suggest that the race riots which occurred in several American communities in 1943 were evidences of gains achieved in racial understanding. Yet, their occurrence resulted in more interracial action, more newspaper and periodical articles dealing objectively with the problem, and a greater display of interest by the general public, than ever before in our national history. On the other hand, those who contend that the problem has evaporated because the doors of American industry have been pried open for the Negro worker, are not being realistic in their appraisal of the forces of reaction which seem determined to re-establish the "old order."

The ensuing report will not be so presumptuous as to attempt to provide solutions to the many problems inherent in this complex situation. It is hoped that the problems presented, the techniques employed and the accomplishments recorded will serve as media for wider understanding, and inspiration for greater cooperative effort toward ultimate solutions.

ADMINISTRATION

Staff

The ordinary responsibilities of administration were increased during 1943 because of staff turnover during a period of changing conditions, and the imposition of new and greater demands. The efficient office secretary, lost to the League in 1942, returned at the beginning of 1943, but accepted a civil service post at the end of 1943. As the year opened, the League lacked funds for resuming much-needed industrial field work, which had been interrupted in 1942 by the loss of two different industrial secretaries. In November, a third secretary was employed, but Selective Service reclassification in February, 1944, again deprived the League of this department of service. Several changes in custodial personnel further disturbed the smooth functioning of the staff.

As the year 1943 came to a close, prospects were much brighter, in that provisions were being made for employment of a secretary in the capacity of assistant to the executive; an industrial secretary to meet the need of employer-employee counselling; and a neighborhood secretary to initiate a long- and carefully-planned program of community-wide education.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Members of the League's democratic executive board have had greater burdens thrust upon them by war conditions, as have other civic-minded, busy people. Lack of quorum occurred for the first time in over ten years with the failure of the January business meeting to proceed. All subsequent meetings attracted from seven to fourteen members for an average of eleven persons in each of the nine sessions. Sub-committee activities obliged board members to give more than the anticipated



Example of Sub-Standard Housing in Newark's First Ward

Courtesy of Newark Housing Authority

amount of time, however, due to staff, budget, survey and other developments in the year's work. Added responsibilities placed upon the Trustees resulted in enactment of By-Laws amendment increasing this body from five to seven members.

As though wearied of the strife and turmoil of a world he had served so long, so faithfully and so well, a pioneer in the Urban League movement in New Jersey passed on to his reward on December 31, 1943. Dr. Wm. H. Vail became the second president of the New Jersey Urban League in 1918, serving in this capacity for a period of 6 years. His body tired in his declining years, but his spirit and interest never waned. For several years, until his death, he was Honorary President of the organization.

Program Analysis

The annual report for 1942 announced the initiation of an evaluation survey of the League's responsibilities, activities and effectiveness. Conducted by Dr. Warren A. Banner, director of Research of the National Urban League, and supervised by a joint committee drawn from among the trustees of the Welfare Federation and the local Urban League, it represented a thorough and objective examination of the local program by the two parent bodies most critically solicitous of its direction and value. Of twelve recommendations proposed in the survey report, ten were accepted by the joint committee and nine of these will

have been initiated early in 1944 or before, as a result of budget increases permitting implementation.

CIVIC ACTIVITIES AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

As implied in the opening words of this report, racial insularity resulting from the national tradition of separation, permits little opportunity for spontaneity in achieving cooperative, interracial action. Its initiation requires specific planning and studied action; its extension occurs only through widespread and effective interpretation. The strangeness which has developed between the two racial communities, affords extremely limited contact or acquaintance between the leadership of the two groups. Thus, the white community knows relatively few Negro leaders upon whom to call even in the infrequent instances when their aid is sought. Recurrent experiences in meeting rebuff, coolness or aloofness in the white community, have produced a spirit of caution, indifference or timidity in the Negro leader who may have much to contribute but for the real or fancied barriers which restrain him.

In addition to serving as a clearing house through which wider interracial contact may be facilitated, the Urban League, through its staff and board personnel, finds it necessary and expedient to pioneer as representatives of the Negro minority in many civic activities. During 1943, the executive served on boards, committees or membership rosters of fourteen organizations of local, state and national scope. Additional groups of uncertain number are served by board members. Three groups served by the executive were directly related to the war effort; three were local interracial citizens' movements and three were state-wide in structure.

Interracial Movements

Newark is unique among the cities of the nation in that it can boast the existence of three distinct and autonomous citizens' groups actively functioning in the field of interracial relations. The first of these is the Interracial Council, which has maintained an active program for years, and currently is making encouraging gains in its efforts to create hospital contacts for Negro professionals. The second is the Intercultural Education Council whose genesis was a conference called in the Urban League building in 1942 by the League's Education subcommittee. During 1943, this group formulated a number of proposals for introduction of living democracy in the public schools of the Newark area. A number of these proposals have been accepted by the Board of Education and are being implemented as this report is written. This group also is responsible for the initiation of Intercultural Education courses being offered at Newark Teachers College.

The Citizens' Committee on Racial Unity, the third of the unique triumvirate, grew out of a conference called jointly by the League executive and the executive of the Court Street YMCA in June, 1943. Newark was stunned by the racial clash which had resulted in the death of a Negro youth, and the serious injuries suffered by several white and colored persons. While prompt and drastic action of officials, labor unionists and public-spirited citizens, served to isolate the area of con-

flict, the need for intensive, preventive action was emphasized by disclosure of the serious underlying tensions that had preceded the clash.

Its personnel drawn from among citizens not identified with its two predecessors, the Citizens Committee attracted a membership of approximately 90 persons from various racial, nationality and religious groups. Coordinating its program to avoid conflict with other organizations, it set up sub-committees on Press and Public Relations, Church, City Administration, Youth and Labor and Management. These committees have conferred with editors of Negro and daily press concerning inflammatory slanting of news; with city officials on the matter of police and other public services in minority group areas; with organized clergy for a more positive race-relations program in the church. Work among Youth and in industrial plants has been geared into existing programs of the Council of Agencies and of Labor unions. It was through one of the Press sub-committee conferences that the news broke revealing the War Department's official plan of releasing news of Negro troops only to such newspapers as specifically requested such releases. This disclosure, and the censorship which is operating to minimize the appearance of Negro troops in Newsreels, have become a major challenge, locally and nationally.

Due almost directly to racial clashes which have occurred recently, hundreds of interracial committees have been formed throughout the country. To report and to coordinate their activities, and to keep a close check upon the state of racial tension, the Julius Rosenwald Fund has subsidized a reporting service under the direction of Dr. Charles Johnson of Fisk University. The local League executive has been charged with the responsibility of reporting the state of race-relationships as they exist in the north Jersey area.

With the active cooperation of the three local, interracial committees, and the Urban League, the New Jersey Goodwill Commission promoted an all-day conference in Newark, devoted to discussions on racial and religious tensions. With splendid representation from all sections of the state and from many nationality, racial and religious groups, the conference adopted a number of progressive proposals which are being implemented by civic, governmental and legislative bodies.

The importance of interracial group functions in the American community has been demonstrated so clearly by the work of the several local organizations, that the Urban League has announced a plan of citing each year, that group which has made the most significant contribution toward improving racial relations. To be known as "The New Jersey Urban League Award," the certificate to be given is being donated by the Newark Teachers' Association.

Community Organization

With the quartering of Negro troops at Port Newark and at Fort Dix, three separate activities were initiated locally to provide entertainment for, and service to the men. Operating independently of each other, there were overlapping and excessive drain upon the limited resources of the Negro community which provided the bulk of subsidy for each venture. On the appeal of one group, the League executive invited



Toward a Program of Democratic Living—Pennington Court, Newark

Courtesy of Newark Housing Authority

representatives of the several groups to a coordinating conference, from which several subsequent meetings stemmed. Greater cooperation and more effective service have grown out of the clarifying discussions.

A month prior to the racial clash in Newark's First Ward, a Grand Jury presentment singling out the Third Ward as a vice area, resulted in many newspaper columns of adverse and destructive publicity being centered upon this area. Considered by many to have been motivated by a political feud, the general effect was that of focussing attention upon the Negro group which constitutes about 50% of the ward population.

In consultation with Negro lay-leadership in the community, the League executive proposed the formation of a Negro Community Council. This group, composed of lay, professional, business and church interests assembled in a number of conferences in which were formulated reports on existing conditions, analysis of the motives for the "smear" campaign, and a course of action.

The League executive was charged with the task of preparing a brief incorporating the thinking of Council deliberation, and in June, at the Council's request, the county Prosecutor called a city-wide conference in which Council representatives met with political, business and social welfare leaders of Newark. In a frank and open discussion of all factors present in community relationships and the injudicious acts of the Grand Jury and the metropolitan press, the Council spokesmen presented a series of recommendations relating to employment, housing, education, health, social service, political recognition, and law enforcement techniques. It has been felt quite generally, that the inflammatory nature of the presentment, and the widespread publicity which attended its release to the press, played no small part in fomenting the racial clash which followed within the month.

Health and Housing

It has been a universal practice with health agencies and departments to release reports on morbidity and mortality with racial comparisons shown, in so-called social diseases particularly. Early in 1943, the late chief of the venereal disease section of the Newark Department of Health released to the press a particularly offensive report. The executive requested a conference with the Health officer and his staff, and with members of the League's Health committee, represented the dissatisfaction of Negro citizens with this pointless and injurious practice. The conference resulted in general agreement by public health officials that the practice would be discontinued immediately.

Housing

As one of the busiest and most diversified manufacturing centers in the country, and because of its peculiar, geographical setting, Newark has been exposed to the threat of being declared a "critical area" by



Training for the Battle of Production

Courtesy of Essex County Vocational Schools

the War Manpower Commission. Lack of housing has been the single factor contributing to this condition, and the most seriously affected group has been the Negro worker but recently admitted to many industries.

In January, the Federal Housing Agency director in New Jersey released a statement reporting figures of FHA developments provided North Jersey home-seekers. Not one was designed for Negro occupancy. The League executive engaged in exchanges of correspondence with FHA National Housing agency, and War Manpower Commission officials, following this correspondence with conferences in Newark and New York WMC and NHA offices. The merry game of "buck-passing" pointed to the urgent necessity of the local Housing Authority conducting a survey to establish undisputed evidence of need, and this recommendation was presented to local housing officials by the League.

The survey was conducted and the figures were of such significance that at the turn of the year the National Housing Agency announced the allocation of funds for a local war housing project in which Negro home-seekers are to be given preferential treatment. Present attempts to block the development, and methods of racial incitement being employed, are current history and not a part of this report.

Meanwhile, so flagrant have been violations of minimum health standards in the city that the Health Department found it necessary to condemn a number of properties and to follow through by forbidding their further use for human habitation. With vacancies for Negroes

absolutely nil in the community, a plan was proposed to utilize the classrooms of the abandoned Belmont Avenue school which until recently had housed WPA projects. Because none but Negro families had been affected by the whole plan the League inquired into the proposal, was assured of the strictly temporary nature of the project, and unwillingly recognized the stern necessity which motivated advocates of the questionable plan. It was a bewildering experience when citizens' groups, which had accepted this unorthodox proposal without question, objected so strenuously when it was announced that new, modern housing had been allocated to the city primarily because of the state of housing affecting Negro citizens.

Addresses and Conferences

Because of racial tensions which have been apparent throughout the state and nation many American citizens have been arried out of the state of indifferent complacency which has been the most potent ally of racial bigotry. There has been a questing for information, perhaps for "it can't happen here" type of security. Demands made upon the League executive have increased to a great degree, by groups desiring a factual discussion of the elements responsible for these tensions.

During the twelve months' period this worker made three radio addresses, two of which were at the invitation of the Goodwill Commission. He addressed 94 groups in twenty north Jersey communities, in New York, Chicago and the state of North Carolina. An aggregate audience of approximately 18,000 persons was met in 28 religious groups, thirty two civic and social service organizations, eleven college classes, ten groups of teachers and high school students, and in thirteen local and national conference sessions as a discussant or speaker. Five special articles were prepared for local and national papers and periodicals, in addition to briefs and memoranda assembled in support of local and state activities.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

As indicated in earlier paragraphs, the League was deprived of the services of an industrial secretary until November. Thus, in but two months of 1943 was this staff member available, a period insufficient for an appreciable contribution to the work.

During the year, however, the League was able to develop a satisfactory working arrangement with the War Manpower Commission and the United States Employment Service to whom greater regulatory powers had been granted. Meantime, at our request representatives of the New York, Brooklyn, National and New Jersey Urban League met in New York to initiate a program of close coordination of industrial work necessitated by the demands being made upon each by New Jersey industries.

In the absence of an industrial specialist during the major portion of the year, the executive made twenty-one industrial field visits, nine of which were in the Newark area, the others being in Mercer and Passaic counties. The majority of these visits were in response to calls from personnel officers who were seeking counsel in regard to plant relationships, or were attempting to locate available labor.

Industrial Fact-Finding

At the request of the National office, a spot-check of selected industries was made to determine the ratio of Negro workers employed in semi-skilled and skilled occupations in the Newark area. Of 115,000 workers employed in these plants, 117% were Negroes; and of this group, approximately 42.3% were classified in skilled and semi-skilled brackets. The inquiry embraced the radio, electrical instrument, aircraft, shipbuilding and heavy mechanical industries, and was initiated as a part of a national Industrial Laboratory program engaging the attention of Urban League personnel.



The "late" Mr. Blank

"Hold Your Job" Campaign

The objective approach of the Urban League to the employment problem of the Negro has enabled the organization to recognize the need for training these workers. A vicious circle has prevented much headway prior to 1943 because neither training facilities for preparation nor commensurate jobs for incentive were available to the Negro in New Jersey. The sudden labor demand, therefore created new opportunities for thousands of black and white workers whose only equipment were willingness, intelligence and varying degrees of adaptability.

Naivete proved to be a serious handicap to many Negro workers whose lack of understanding of industrial organization and practice was being observed critically and unsympathetically by white workers and supervisors. In addition, a small minority of Negro workers carried to their new jobs undesirable work habits. In many situations the defections of the few, were attributed to the whole group.



Chip-on-the-Shoulder

The League sought the cooperation of Negro clergymen, business and professional groups, and the community at large, interpreting to them the need for intensive work. A six-page folder was composed by the League executive, eight amusing and catchy cartoons executed by a New York artist, Roger Vernam, as his contribution to the effort, and fourteen Negro organizations completely subsidized and distributed the 20,000 folders in the Negro communities of north Jersey. Lampooning eight types of troublemakers, the folder was widely read



The Public Pest

and highly effective League branches in Little Rock, Ark., St. Louis, Mo., and Richmond, Va., requested and received our cooperation in re-printing 60,000 additional copies for their use.

The initial release of these folders was timed with the promotion by the Workers' Council of a "Hold Your Job" forum. Held in the heat of late June, approximately 150 persons participated in the pertinent discussion led by four prominent white and colored employment specialists.

Placement Work

The depletion of the local labor supply was first felt in the domestic service field. Lacking organization, labor protection or minimum standards of hours or wages, this has always been a marginal and unpopular employment area to be deserted at the earliest opportunity. Workers unable to meet the demands of industry, were able to affect their own hours of labor by doing day work only, this being made reasonably profitable by the rising wage scale. The demands made upon the placement agency for repeat placements however were inordinate and early in the year the League abandoned day-work placement service.

In a similar sense, routine placements in industry showed considerable decline as the year progressed, first because of depletion of the labor supply, and secondly due to the more rigid controls of labor-turnover affected by the War Manpower Commission.

Employment service for 1943 reflected the following figures

	Employer Orders	Applications	Placements
Male	128	215	163
Female	1391	870	1288
Total	1519	1085	1451

Of the placements made a total number of 313 were industrial workers placed directly by the League. Eighteen clerical workers were placed, but this modest total in no way reflects the significance of recent changes in these occupations. Prior to 1942 an entire year's record would show not one clerical position filled by a Negro worker. Today many times eighteen clerks, stenographers, typists, etc. have found employment through efforts of the League and other private and governmental agencies.

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Staff difficulties imposed serious handicaps upon the League's desire to cope with the many requests for counsel and guidance in the realm of personal and family problems. Lacking knowledge of available case-work facilities locally harboring fear or distrust of 'white' agencies or requiring specialized service obtainable only at the League, ninety-nine Negro clients were aided by the Urban League. Forty-one cases were referred by schools, courts and other agencies public and private while forty were referred by the League to sister agencies. These figures might imply indulgence in a "buck-passing" routine which is not the case. In each instance, the League filled the gap of special need, where race and color had imposed especial and peculiar problems which were beyond the ken of other agencies. Conversely, all cases found to be within the professional jurisdiction of private or public agencies were promptly referred to the proper ones. Other situations, representing significant problems but not registered as "cases" received the League's attention.

The following examples are brief summaries selected from actual situations handled by the League in 1943:

(a) A letter of complaint, directed to the League by a mid-Jersey resident, reported that the condition of several houses in that town had prompted State Health officials to order immediate repairs. Upon completion of the work, the landlord applied to OPA for drastic increases of the rents which had been unreasonable previously because of the dangerous condition of the property. Clearing with health officials to verify the report representations were made to OPA that tenants who had been forced to pay for facilities which were below minimum legal standards should not be further exploited when the state requires the owner to meet those minimum standards of health and safety that the payment of a standard rental figure in itself implied that the tenant was purchasing legally protected facilities. A ruling to this general effect was issued in the particular case, and subsequently has been employed as a precedent in others.

b. A private trade school in north Jersey had been advertising widely in the Negro press promising direct placement in industry of all its graduates and making claims of unusually high wages being earned by former trainees who were identified by photo name and address. One individual so identified reported his experience with the school, with the charge that he was thrust into debt with a personal loan company, at the insistence and direction of the school that his training was inadequate and that the placement they had to offer was far inferior to that promised. The complaint was thoroughly sifted, an affidavit taken from the complainant and the report filed with the state Department of Education. At the hearing in which the League was represented by an industrial committee member, the school was given stern directives to insure ethical practice in the future.

(c. The executive received a call from a north Jersey police precinct to visit a Negro prisoner who was being held. His name and address were recorded with the blotter notation disorderly conduct. The League worker noted immediately evidences of mental, and probable physical, illness. The prisoner was able to give practically no coherent information. According to the record he had been apprehended exactly one month before the interview, no effort had been made to contact family friends or employer, police records had been checked in a fruitless effort to find record of any past infractions of the law, and he was being held for no other reason than it would be unsafe to release him. From personal affects found by the police upon the prisoner the League secretary located the man's wife twenty four hours later learned that he was a hard working law abiding husband, and father of three adolescent boys, that he had suffered a nervous breakdown several months before and now after thirty days of frantic search by the wife in New York and New Jersey Missing Persons Bureaus, had been presumed to be lost to the family forever.



Interracial Harmony in Robert Treat School

Cutting through inter-state red tape, the erstwhile prisoner was transported to New York, given over to police custody and assigned to Bellevue hospital. The whole matter was presented formally to the Prosecutor of the county and Police Board of the city involved, with urgent recommendations that routine clearance systems be inaugurated which would prevent a recurrence of such tragic blunders.

(d) J. D. came to the League office in a state of deep concern. He was sent by his employer for whom he has proven to be a skilled dependable workman. Although 45 years of age, he was being threatened with immediate re-induction into the Army from which he had received an over-age discharge four months previously. Inasmuch as he returned to an industrial job in a southern town. For a number of years, he had carried full responsibility of firing a bank of boilers for the southern concern receiving the magnificent sum of 35 cents per hour. Although 44 years of age and married, the draft board in the small back woods town inducted him. After 3 months in service, the former employer applied for his release, reminding him after his discharge that he now was frozen in the job and to leave it would mean immediate return to the Army.

He was kept busy seven days a week, and from 12 to 14 hours a day. The old rate of 35 cents an hour was retained, but time and-a-half was allowed for overtime including Sundays. Getting tied up with the exploitation of an employer working on cost-plus government contracts, J. D. left. By stages, each properly reported to his draft board, he wound up in a good job in New Jersey. The draft board, through neighborly concern, advised the erstwhile employer of J. D.'s whereabouts; he in turn invoked the aid of the War Manpower Commission in that southern region, and the ponderous wheels of government turned out a mandate demanding J. D.'s immediate return to Mississippi.

The full matter was reported by the League to WMC in this region to the Selective Service Commission in Washington and to the Wages and Hours Division of the Labor Department who would have some concern with the wage rates and illegal overtime rates which pay envelopes revealed. The U. S. Treasury was asked about monies that had been withheld by the employer for War Bonds. The local office of WMC has not been pressed for further action. Selective Service evidently has concluded that the matter over and over the Treasury Department has forwarded his war bond, and J. D. and his New Jersey employer are profiting by the regard each holds for the other.

Seasonal Charities

As in former years, the League served as a medium through which the generosity of Yuletide could reach needy families in the Negro community. As a participant in L. Bamberger & Co.'s Neediest Stockings campaign, the League was able to bring happiness to twenty-five worthy children. The Needlework Guild and the Jewish Children's Home contributed 98 items of clothing; the Salvation Army distributed 24 Christmas food-checks; and two members of the League board contributed \$15 in cash, all of which were distributed among families whose needs were known to the League.

Clinic and Assembly

Baby-Keep-Well clinics operating in the League building served an aggregate of 971 infants brought to the clinic during the year. In addition, a total of 486 immunizations and 259 vaccinations were administered by the clinic staff in the League building in 1943.

Use of the League's main office as an assembly room for civic and professional groups resulted in an aggregate attendance of 1120 persons in 86 separate meetings, called by nine different organizations.

Phyllis Wheatley Home

Very slight turnover in the tenancy of Phyllis Wheatley Home is but a reflection of the better employment opportunities available to colored working women, and the lack of private housing in the area. The total capacity of the home is 14 beds, and the year's average occupancy has been maintained at slightly over 13.5. A total of 5037 days' care has been provided: 4638 to regular, paying tenants; 357 days' care to clients of public relief; and 42 free days' care to indigent transients.

Conclusion

America's fight for freedom is not confined to the high seas and the beachheads of Italy and the South Pacific. The ultimate test of democratic freedom is being applied on the home front. A most dangerous wave of reaction is threatening to engulf our nation, but the significance of this threat has not registered with citizens generally, as yet.

The work of the Urban League and similar organizations, is being increased tenfold; responsibilities to city and state have grown immeasurably. Experience has taught that the least favored group in society is the first to feel the effect of reactionary aggression. To that degree, the Negro is America's socio-economic barometer. Even though the day seems fair, unseen forces register upon the sensitive instrument to record that which impends for tomorrow.

Racial tensions are an indication that all is not well; organized farm and business lobbies in Congress would jeopardize national security for selfish gain; anti-labor forces publicize the defections of isolated union groups or wildcat strikers, while glossing over similar occurrences in the business world. The National Association of Real Estate Boards attack low-cost housing and propose a nefarious plan whereby public

funds would subsidize private agents and operators, rather than the tenants. Elected representatives of the people, occupying the most honored positions the nation can bestow, sully the halls of Congress and state legislatures with invectives and vituperation intended to incite racial and religious hatred, and boldly advocate the beastly Hitlerian doctrine of racial superiority. And, millions of American soldiers, by parliamentary chicanery, will be denied the right to vote—because the practice of Negro disfranchisement must not be challenged! Acts of aggression, aimed primarily at the Negro and at those who espouse his cause, ultimately strike at the freedom and security of all of us.

The Urban League's task of recording, measuring, interpreting and counter-acting these acts of aggression, cannot confine its function solely to the immediate needs of its Negro constituency. In like measure, citizens of the community cannot permit themselves to think or act along strictly-defined, racial lines. The threat, and any challenges to the threat, involve us all. As we offer our prayers for our boys on foreign battle fronts, let us also beseech the Lord of Hosts to give us the strength, the moral courage, and the vision with which to safeguard the home front, lest the men whose great sacrifices will bring victory abroad, face on their return the shocking disillusionment that indifference or complacency on our part will assure.

Acknowledgement

The accomplishments of the staff could not have been thus recorded but for the unselfish assistance and cooperation of many people, organizations and interests. The Executive Board has been magnificent in the help, encouragement and stimulation it has provided. The Welfare Federation trustees and director, in approving and implementing the program study and its subsequent recommendations, have inspired the organization to face its task with greater hope, courage and vision. Employers and labor representatives, the press and the clergy, citizens' organizations and public officials, have extended aid at every turn. In our expressions of gratitude to all who have been helpful, also is included our pledge of continued effort toward the goal of unity, security and freedom—the concern of all Americans.

Respectfully submitted,

HAROLD A. LETT,
Executive Secretary.

TREASURER'S REPORT

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURES

December 31, 1943

	January 1, 1942 to December 31, 1942	January 1, 1943 to December 31, 1943
INCOME:		
Welfare Federation of Newark, N. J....	\$ 7,009.92	\$ 8,009.88
Phyllis Wheatley Home.....	1,961.25	2,148.25
Clinic Rental	300.00	300.00
Assembly Rental	51.00	61.00
Donations and Membership.....	279.22	466.30
Apartment Rental	280.00	385.00
	\$ 9,881.39	\$11,370.43

ADMINISTRATIVE AND OVERHEAD EXPENSES:

Salaries	\$ 6,341.50	\$ 7,337.01
Conferences and Conventions.....	169.19	239.24
Publications and Subscriptions.....	21.62	32.50
Telephone	396.44	389.22
Traveling Expenses	267.81	183.40
Postage	97.49	133.81
Dues	160.00	170.00
Stationery and Printing.....	124.65	212.07
Bank Service Charges.....	16.81	11.35
Relief	12.50	23.35
Fuel	490.01	449.37
Gas and Electric.....	504.94	523.04
Water	70.37	61.49
Repairs	45.38	96.99
Insurance	94.06	156.14
General Supplies	191.82	213.78
Laundry	109.49	98.97
Annual Meeting	41.00	—44.50
Miscellaneous Expenses	78.07	35.16
Office Supplies	122.79	66.94
Audit		45.00
	\$ 9,355.94	\$10,434.33

NET SURPLUS FOR THE PERIOD.....	\$ 525.45	\$ 936.10
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